

## United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4606

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Good morning and welcome,

Southwest Virginia has been hit hard by prescription drug abuse. All of us know a neighbor, a loved one, or a friend that has turned to substance-abuse, and we have witnessed this addiction break up marriages, families, and, in some instances, entire communities. Getting these individuals back on the right track has to be one of our top priorities.

Earlier this year, I voted to require the Secretary of the Health and Human Service Department to review current federal initiatives to combat prescription drug abuse, to identify existing gaps in our current efforts, and make recommendations to improve the services provided to affected individuals, families, and communities.

Southwest Virginia is important to me. I always mention that one of my proudest moments as Governor was when I announced the arrival of CGI and Northrup Grumman to Lebanon, Virginia. The lessons I learned then have convinced me that the most important thing I can do for job creation is to continue to work towards a bipartisan solution to our nation's debt problem. Our unsustainable deficits deprive the economy of much needed certainty and predictability, which is needed for the kind of private investment that will create opportunities. In the months ahead, our bipartisan group of Senators, now known as the Gang of Eight, will work to build support and move toward a vote on a comprehensive plan.

But jobs alone are not enough. The magnitude of the prescription drug problem requires a collaborative response, one that brings together faith-based leaders, law enforcement, the private sector, and government. That's the vision the U.S. Attorney for the Western District of Virginia, Tim Heaphy, has put forth and I would like to acknowledge his foresight and leadership. It is his commitment and strong will, and the tireless effort of his talented team that has made this event possible.

This summit provides a platform for members of the community to engage in an honest and open discussion about what works and what does not, and to chart a path forward. You have the opportunity to voice your concerns, provide feedback, and communicate with decision makers. I have staff in attendance that will also report back to me – I care about this issue. We are in this together.

Again, thank you all for taking your time to get involved in this effort. These discussions will not only affect outcomes on a local level but on a national one as well.

Sincerely,



Mark R. Warner  
United States Senator

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